

**General Matthew B. Ridgway and Army Design
Methodology during the Korean War**

**A Monograph
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Abstract

GENERAL MATTHEW B. RIDGWAY AND ARMY DESIGN METHODOLOGY DURING THE KOREAN WAR, by MAJ James T. Outland, USA, 49 pgs.

Despite the vast research by Americans on General Matthew B. Ridgway's miraculous transformation of the Eighth Army during the Korean War, few studies have examined his operational approach, while contrasting it with General Douglas MacArthur's. The constructed reality that emerges from the literature is that General MacArthur's operational desires led to a strained relationship with President Truman and ultimately limited his ability to employ forces in the manner he believed necessary to defeat the Communist Chinese Forces. Similarly, the impression of General Ridgway painted by historical text is that sheer will stopped and turned around the frantic retreating army, which subsequently halted the CCF advance and pushed the communists beyond the 38th Parallel. Army Design Methodology provides a powerful tool for viewing these actions in a new perspective. This monograph examines the actions of General MacArthur and General Ridgway and their application of critical and creative thinking to the problem created by the entry of Communist Chinese Forces onto the Korean Peninsula in October and November of 1950. This study details the significant reframing that characterized the methods applied by General Ridgway during 1950 and 1951, providing future operational commanders a relevant historical example of Army Design Methodology in action.

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Section I

Introduction

The United Nation's (U.N.) overwhelming success caused by Operation Chromite on September 15, 1950 and the positioning of its forces near the Yalu River on October 26, 1950 triggered the People's Liberation Army of China, supported by Soviet Union equipment and weapons systems, to intervene in the Korean War on behalf of North Korea. The infusion of Chinese soldiers caused U.N. forces to transition to the defense and retrograde repeatedly. In disarray, U.N. forces withdrew south of the 38th Parallel in an attempt to thwart the communist attackers. During the U.N. retrograde, the Eighth Army Commander, Lieutenant General (LTG) Walton "Johnnie" Walker died in a vehicle accident and LTG Matthew Ridgway assumed command of the ground forces. Under General Ridgway's leadership, U.N. Forces were able to resume the attack and hurled communist forces north of the 38th Parallel. General Ridgway understood that the strategic context of the war changed with China's entry. Understanding success no longer meant halting communist expansion, destroying the North Korean Army, and unifying Korea, but reestablishing the 38th Parallel and defending South Korea. Ridgway was able to reframe the problem to ensure the tactical actions remained linked to achieving the desired strategic aim of containing communism. The contemporary significance of this monograph provides operational commanders a relevant historical example of Army Design Methodology in action. This monograph analyzes the decisions made by General Matthew B. Ridgway during his command of the Eighth Army and United Nations Command exemplifying the practical application of design.

This work will review the history presented by the decisions of General Ridgway during the Korean War using goals of Army Design Methodology. Organized chronologically, this monograph examines the political, strategic, and tactical changes that occurred during the fighting in Korea, as well as how the conflict was bounded and restricted by political guidance. The first

section will examine the key events and decisions that led to U.S. involvement in the Korean War. Additionally, General MacArthur's actions during the Korean War, his interaction with senior military and governmental leaders, and actions that led to his dismissal are analyzed. Finally, the first section will include strategic guidance received by General MacArthur and General Ridgway and a literature review that includes state department records, memoirs, official documents, and correspondence between key personnel.

The second section examines events that influenced hostilities and occurred during the Korean War prior to General Ridgway's arrival to the theater of war as the Eighth Army Commander. Specifically, the period of September 1945 through December 1950 is examined and focuses on events that enabled the North Korean attack, the reaction of the U.N. and its counterattack, and the injection of CCF and their counteraction. The third section focuses on the days immediately following LTG Walton Walker's death and examines Ridgway's initial operational construct as the Eighth Army Commander. This section analyzes Ridgway's service as the commander of the Eighth Army, or more specifically, the period covering December 1950 through April 1951. The fourth section analyzes MacArthur's removal from command, Ridgway's assumption of command, and concludes with Ridgway's second operational construct. Specifically, a detailed examination of MacArthur's actions and reactions will be conducted with a detailed analysis of his inability to adapt to the changing environment of post-World War II. Finally, a fifth and concluding section will show that the decisions made by General Ridgway during his command of the Eighth Army, Allied Powers in Japan, United Nations Command, and U.S. Army Forces Far East exemplify the practical application of operational art and design. The monograph concludes with a discussion on the importance of the military commander's understanding of the strategic context to align the military and political objectives to achieve the strategic endstate.

Key Events

This section analyzes significant actions during the Korean War between the periods of January 1948 through May 1952. Occurrences analyzed include the invasion of South Korea by NKPA forces and the decisions that allowed the invasion to occur. The second activity examined will be the U.N. offensive that began on September 15, 1950 with the Inchon landings, subsequent Pusan Perimeter breakout, and crossings of the 38th Parallel by U.N. forces. The third significant act studied is the Communist Chinese Forces (CCF) movement into North Korea, their ensuing attack on U.N. forces and campaign throughout North Korea, and south of the 38th Parallel. Finally, the fourth event is General Matthew Ridgway's assumption of command of the "Amphibious Eighth" and the ensuing U.N. counterattacks.

The invasion of South Korea by the NKPA forces on June 25, 1950 was precipitated by several events to include political considerations and ideology advancement. Due to budget considerations and a national strategy that appeared to exclude Korea, the United States failed to build the South Korean defenses on par with Russia's formation of the North Korean military might, rather building a constabulary force capability in South Korea.¹ North Korea's President Kim Il Sung, sought and received permission to bring war to South Korea from the communist leadership in the Soviet Union and China, however the Premier of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin, had multiple motives for his approval. Knowing China's reaction to the possible U.S. intervention, Stalin used the North Korean invasion as a way to further isolate China from the United States, as he was aware of the U.S. hopes of a Sino-Soviet split.² Additionally, Stalin

¹ Trumbull Higgins, *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur: A Précis in Limited War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1960), 11.

² William Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 76.

sought to continue to expand communism in Asia without direct confrontation with the U.S.³ The North Korean decision to invade South Korea was based on the desire to unite the peninsula under communist rule and the perceived weakness of South Korean President Syngman Rhee. Kim Il Sung delayed his invasion until Chinese communist forces under Mao Tse-tung defeated Nationalist Chinese forces in order to receive support of China.⁴ Additionally, Kim Il Sung was informed the war of unification should not begin as an attack, but rather under the pretext of a counterattack against South Korea's provocation. Lastly, due to the Korean War, China's invasion of Taiwan was halted because of the positioning of the U.S. Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Strait.⁵

The significance of the U.N. offensive that began on September 15, 1950 with the Inchon landings, subsequent Pusan Perimeter breakout, and crossings of the 38th Parallel, was that these resounding successes led to a shift in the strategic aims of the U.S. and U.N. Prior to the U.N. offensive, the strategic aim was to eject the NKPA forces from South Korea and reestablish the 38th Parallel.⁶ After the NKPA forces disintegrated in South Korea, the United States' Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), with presidential approval changed the strategic aims. The JCS issued MacArthur a new directive to destroy NKPA forces and occupy North Korea, however MacArthur was not to cross the borders of Manchuria or Russia.⁷ Clay Blair claims in *The*

³ Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War*, 77.

⁴ Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War* (Seoul, Korea: Korea Institute of Military History, 1997), 5-6.

⁵ Roy E. Appleman, *Disaster in Korea: The Chinese Confront MacArthur* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 12.

⁶ Higgins, *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur*, 52. Communist Chinese Forces under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung and backed by the Soviet Union defeated the U.S. backed Nationalist Chinese Forces in 1949. Nationalist Chinese Forces, led by Chiang Kai-shek established its government on Formosa after losing the Chinese civil war and being ousted from mainland China.

⁷ Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (New York, NY: Da Capo Press, 1964), 358.

Forgotten War that President Truman's new strategic aim was to, "destroy the NKPA, depose of the communist regime, and unify Korea under a single, popularly elected government."⁸

The CCF entry into the war was predicated on the U.N. offensive north of the 38th Parallel.⁹ The U.S. received several indirect warnings from the Chinese Government and overt notifications of the pending Chinese involvement from an Ambassador from India, if U.N. forces crossed the 38th Parallel. The Chinese, with Soviet permission, entered the war on behalf of the North Koreans as U.N. forces approached the Yalu River with the execution of their "First Phased Offensive" on October 25, 1950.¹⁰ CCF forces, consisting of approximately 380,000 men, began their "Second Phased Offensive" on November 25 at 2200 hours, southwest of the Yalu River and continued to push U.N. forces back until U.N. forces were positioned near the 38th Parallel on December 15, 1950.¹¹ As the U.N. forces operating on the East Coast of North Korea were evacuated by sea, MacArthur made calls to evacuate South Korea in an effort to gain more divisions and to relax the rules of engagement.¹²

LTG Matthew B. Ridgway assumed command of Eighth Army after LTG Walker was killed in a vehicle accident on December 23, 1950.¹³ Ridgway assumed command of the Eighth Army as it was wounded and retreating south after every engagement with the CCF. Ridgway was able to instill an offensive spirit into the Army as he replaced incompetent senior leaders and

⁸ Clay Blair, *The Forgotten War: America in Korea 1950-1953* (New York, NY: Times Books, 1988), 325.

⁹ Appleman, *Disaster in Korea*, 11.

¹⁰ Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War*, 104. The First Phased Offensive commenced on October 25, 1950 and was designed to destroy three ROK divisions and to stop the U.N. advance towards the Yalu through counterattacks, raids, and ambushes. There would be a total of five CCF offensives during the war with the first three being successful.

¹¹ United States Army, *The First Ten Years: A Short History of the Eighth United States Army, 1944-1954* (Seoul, South Korea: Military History Section, January 1955), 21.

¹² Higgins, *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur*, 90-96.

¹³ United States Army, *The First Ten Years: A Short History of the Eighth United States Army, 1944-1954*, 25.

moved command posts closer to the fighting.¹⁴ Utilizing his experience, education, and knowledge of the strategic aims, Ridgway visualized his operational approach. He exchanged key terrain in order to secure suitable defensive positions to refit and reorganize his Army.¹⁵ Ridgway then conducted a series of tactical engagements that met his theater campaign endstate of reestablishing the 38th Parallel and defending South Korea. His battles focused on killing the enemy and draining its resources instead of focusing on irrelevant terrain.

Strategic Guidance

This section examines the strategic guidance the combatant commander, General MacArthur received while serving as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan (SCAP), Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command in Korea (UNCOM), and Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Army Forces Far East (FECOM). The examination includes strategic guidance received prior to the North Korean invasion of South Korea and following the NKPA invasion of South Korea. Additionally, this section includes an analysis of the strategic guidance received by MacArthur before U.N. forces crossed the 38th Parallel and after the entry of the CCF into the war.

Prior to the invasion, General MacArthur received permission to remove FECOM forces from the Korean Peninsula to reinforce occupation forces operating in Japan as communist sympathizers increased their subversive activities.¹⁶ Additionally, the U.N. approved a measure calling for the removal of foreign forces from the peninsula.¹⁷ However, the American Central

¹⁴ Joseph C. Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War* (New York, NY: Times Books, 1982), 437.

¹⁵ Allen R. Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2010), 384.

¹⁶ William Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation: American Policy toward China and Korea, 1947-1950* (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Press, 1981), 154.

¹⁷ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 119.

Intelligence Agency (CIA) determined that the strength of the North Korean forces were so great that the peninsula would fall under the rule of communism.¹⁸ Due to the CIA's findings, the National Security Council (NSC) passed NSC-8 supporting the buildup of South Korean forces as well as authorizing the creation and staffing of the Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG) by U.S. Army personnel.¹⁹

After the NKPA's invasion of South Korea, the initial guidance from the U.S. Government was to remove all Americans from the Korean Peninsula. Immediately after issuing the initial guidance, the administration called for assistance in arms and ammunition, which would arrive on June 30 with KMAG's officers and NCOs returning to assist the Republic of Korea (ROK) Army.²⁰ President Truman called for the aircraft carrier stationed in Subic Bay, Philippines to relocate to Okinawa, Japan as a show of force to the Chinese Government and to provide naval gun and aircraft support to the ROK forces.²¹ On June 29, 1950, President Truman issued MacArthur a new directive authorizing the use of American forces to provide services and maintain communications with ROK forces, combat troops to retain terrain in the vicinity of Pusan, attack targets in North Korea with air and naval gun fire, defend Taiwan from attack from China, and provide supplies and ammunition to ROK forces.²² Lastly, MacArthur was given the

¹⁸ Central Intelligence Agency. *ORE 3-49, The Consequences of Troop Withdrawal from Korea in the Spring, 1949*. February 24, 1949; Truman Library. http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/koreanwar/index.php, (accessed 14 January 2012).

¹⁹ Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, 99.

²⁰ T.R. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 1963), 52 and Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume Two*, 336.

²¹ Harry Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume Two* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday), 337; and, Millett, *The War for Korea*, 115.

²² Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 57.

strategic guidance of restoring the Republic of Korea to its prewar status by reestablishing the 38th Parallel and defending South Korea from further aggression.²³

The resounding success of the Inchon landings and the subsequent Pusan Perimeter breakout resulted in MacArthur's strategic guidance changing from expelling NKPA forces from South Korea and reestablishing the 38th Parallel.²⁴ The overwhelming success of Inchon challenged Truman's considerations on his policy of containment as well as providing MacArthur with the objective of destroying the NKPA in North Korea and to feel "unhampered tactically and strategically."²⁵ John Spanier states in *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy* that, "General MacArthur's magnificent amphibious operation at Inchon transformed the character of the war; his military victory changed it from a defensive war seeking only to re-establish the status quo to an offensive war attempting to affect a permanent change in the status quo."²⁶

MacArthur received guidance from several sources to include the South Korean President Syngman Rhee, who demanded the U.N. forces go to the Yalu. The U.S. Secretary of Defense George Marshall told MacArthur to feel strategically unhampered and to proceed north of the 38th Parallel and unify Korea.²⁷ Furthermore, the Truman administration passed NSC 81, which authorized operations north of the 38th Parallel and left the door open for the possibility of operations within the borders of Manchuria. Finally, the U.N. passed a resolution on October 7, 1950 calling for stability, elections, a unified government, and for U.N. forces not to remain in Korea other than to achieve their objectives.²⁸

²³ Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*, 259.

²⁴ Higgins, *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur*, 52.

²⁵ Ibid., 54.

²⁶ John W. Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War* (New York, NY: Norton, 1965), 259.

²⁷ Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 238.

²⁸ Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*, 88.

After receiving direction from so many interested groups, MacArthur found loopholes within his strategic guidance in order to do what he wanted.²⁹ Utilizing these groups' guidance against each other, MacArthur decided to utilize non-Korean forces vicinity of the Yalu River in direct violation of President Truman's guidance.³⁰ Due to the U.N.'s failure to adhere to China's warnings, Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) entered the war because foreign forces crossed the 38th Parallel.³¹ With the entry of the CCF, the strategic guidance and aims changed once again.

The influx of the CCF caused the JCS to send the Commander in Chief of UNCOM and FECOM a directive for defensive actions, reminding MacArthur his primary mission is the defense of Japan.³² This appalled MacArthur causing him to request to expand the war against China by bombing and blockading her factories and ports.³³ MacArthur also called for the employment of Nationalist Chinese troops under the command of Chiang Kai-shek to attack Beijing.³⁴ Additionally, MacArthur requested four additional U.S. divisions to contain the 15 NKPA divisions and 26 CCF divisions on the Korean Peninsula.³⁵ President Truman concluded that while General MacArthur was willing to risk a general war, he was not.³⁶ In response to MacArthur's requests and statements, Truman concluded that he needed to better inform his field commander of the strategic implications of his actions. Truman wired MacArthur a telegram containing the basic national and international purposes for remaining in Korea and limiting the

²⁹ Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, 239.

³⁰ Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume Two*, 336; and, Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, 239.

³¹ Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 281.

³² Robert J. Donovan, *Nemesis: Truman and Johnson in the Coils of War in Asia* (New York: NY: St. Martins, 1984), 144.

³³ Donovan, *Nemesis*, 144.

³⁴ Higgins, *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur*, 94.

³⁵ Thomas G. Bradbeer, *Setting the Stage: Korea, December 1950* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: United States Army Command and General Staff College, L205 Reading A, 2008), 228.

³⁶ Higgins, *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur*, 92.

war to the boundaries of the Korea Peninsula.³⁷ The telegram was a reminder to MacArthur that Russia was the major potential foe, Europe is still the prize, and the NKPA and CCF would be fought with limited means.³⁸

With this in mind, Truman still believed that Korea was a test case for communism and that stopping communism in Asia would deter war in Europe.³⁹ The president truly respected the South Koreans and was determined not to abandon them. He envisioned a defeat in Korea as a prelude to Chinese aggression and actions against Taiwan. However, Truman no longer saw a unified Korea or larger war on the peninsula, but he would rather accept a status quo antebellum settlement.⁴⁰

Literature Review

There are several crucial sources of primary documents related to the study of the Korean War. One of the most useful and readily available sources is the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum. The material available is vital to the understanding of political and military debate as well as following the trials and tribulations of the U.N. Command. Additionally, the library's Presidential papers and diplomatic and military cables are critical for a researcher to gain a complete understanding of the tensions that played out during the earliest days of the Cold War. Likewise, the US State Department's official history of foreign policy *Foreign Relations of the United States*' (FRUS) Cold War and Korean War documents are just as accessible and equally important for the Korean War researcher. These two on-line databases are readily available and provide a primary source window into our nation's past for students, scholars, and historians.

³⁷ Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 276.

³⁸ Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume Two*, 433; and, Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 276.

³⁹ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 362.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 363.

Autobiographies and memoirs provide an insightful source of information on the period under study. An examination of Harry Truman's *Memoirs* provided a particularly illuminating insight into the President and his field commander's relationship or lack of it. President Truman's *Memoirs*, like MacArthur's *Reminiscences*, paints a one sided story in favor of the author. However, Truman, unlike MacArthur's story is supported by secondary sources. An example of this is seen when Truman and MacArthur write of their discussions regarding Chinese intervention into the Korean War during the Wake Island meeting. William Stueck's *The Road to Confrontation* confirms Truman's view of the discussions on Wake Island. Additionally, Stueck concludes that the entry of the CCF into the War is the point where Truman lost all trust in MacArthur. Similar circumstances surround MacArthur's *Reminiscences* and Ridgway's *The Korean War* with secondary source authors supporting Ridgway's claims regarding circumstances surrounding the U.N. counteroffensive of 1951.

Additional primary source documents utilized during the examination of this thesis includes *The First Ten Years: A Short History of the Eighth United States Army, 1944-1954*. This primary source document was published by the Eighth Army in 1955 and provides detailed timelines of deployments and employments of U.N., NKPA, and CCF forces. Additionally, *The First Ten Years* provides insightful information on named U.N. operations, which were executed during General Ridgway's command of the Eighth Army as well as LTG Walker and General Van Fleet. Likewise, the United Nation's databases provide a great source for U.N. resolutions during the Korean War. Particularly insightful were the series of U.N. resolutions from 1950 regarding the *Complaint of aggression upon the Republic of Korea*.

Numerous writings surround the general topic of the Korean War, however only a select few focus specifically on the Truman and MacArthur controversy. Of note are John Spanier's *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*, Trumbull Higgins' *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur*, and William Stueck's *The Road to Confrontation* and *Rethinking the Korean War*. Spanier's aim was to examine the Truman and MacArthur dispute as well as analyze the

problems of the civil-military relationship. Spanier views the results of the controversy as a defense of civilian control over the military. Additionally, Spanier examined the paradigm shift of total war to limited war, explaining that limited war was the only rational response in the face of global atomic war. While Higgins and Spanier's books cover roughly the same period and were written in the same decade, Higgins provides a more even handed approach regarding U.S. leadership. Higgins provides the reader detailed information on the ebb and flow of military operations and how policy continuously changed to align itself with the ever-changing direction of hostilities. William Stueck builds on Spanier and Higgins' works as his books were published after official U.S. records were released. Stueck specifically examines the origins of the Korean War and U.S. policy surrounding the conflict going back to the Second World War.

An examination of secondary source general histories of the Korean War included several celebrated books and renowned authors. Included in this elite group is T.R. Fehrenbach's *This Kind of War*, Joseph Goulden's *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, and Clay Blair's *The Forgotten War*. Any study of the Korean War without referencing *This Kind of War* is incomplete due to the rich and vast information that Fehrenbach provides. Published shortly after the Korean War's first official Army publication and shortly before America's entry into the Vietnam War, Fehrenbach paints a realistic picture of the poorly trained and equipped units that went sent to battle. Goulden's *Korea: The Untold Story of the War* is the first significant work on the Korean War published after the conclusion of the Vietnam War. The post-Vietnam opinion of American society can be seen throughout Goulden's book, as he is highly critical of the administration and Army leadership. Additionally, Goulden cites MacArthur's relief as a reason behind the military's reluctance to question political decisions during the Vietnam War. Despite its criticism of policy and leadership, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War* provides a substantial source of information on the period under study. Clay Blair's *The Forgotten War* is the most thorough volume on the Korean War and provides a reader with a firm grasp of the totality of the military and political activities. Blair like Goulden is highly critical of political leadership and senior military leaders,

with the exception of General Matthew Ridgway. Blair's in-depth analysis of military operations throughout the Korean War provides a useful source of data for anyone studying this military campaign.

Finally, it should be noted that material from sources in Asia and Russia were not used in this monograph. Given the constraints of the MMAS thesis and that the primary focus of this study is to highlight the practical application of current doctrine utilizing a historical military campaign, this is the preferred approach.

Section II

Origins of the 1950 Korean War

With the surrender of the Japanese Empire in 1945, allied powers divided the Korean peninsula along the 38th Parallel with United States and Soviet troops occupying the southern and northern halves of the peninsula respectively.⁴¹ The ensuing years saw a significant disparity in support to North and South Korea from their protectorate states. North Korea received military training and new equipment from the Soviet Union, while the United States focused on the defense and rebuilding of Western Europe with the implementation of the Marshall Plan. Although the Marshall Plan assisted numerous countries on the peripheral areas of the Far East, to include South Korea, it was primarily focused to rebuild Europe as the administration saw it as the center of gravity of the Cold War. Additionally, President Truman was under political pressure to cut the budget of all armed services, further reducing the nation's military capability and relying on the newly formed United Nations to prevent hostility.⁴²

Soldiers from the United States Army remained in South Korea after the conclusion of the Second World War, however they were few in number and their equipment was the aging

⁴¹ Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, 22.

⁴² Matthew B. Ridgway, *The Korean War* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 13.

remnant of the equipment used to defeat Japan.⁴³ In response to the perceived size of the North Korean Army and a United Nations resolution calling for the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Korean Peninsula in 1948, the National Security Council drafted NSC 8 on the security of South Korea. NSC 8 directed the buildup of South Korean security by increasing the size of the South Korean Army and providing effective protection for the security of South Korea.⁴⁴

The Soviet Union's withdrawal of troops from North Korea in accordance with the United Nations security resolution, as well as the continued rise in tensions between democratic and communist ideologies around the world, caused the U.S. to rethink its policy on South Korea. The Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan and Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Army Forces Far East, General Douglas MacArthur, with the administration's blessing, approved the removal of soldiers from Korea to reinforce his occupation forces in Japan due to ongoing threats from the Communist Party in Japan.⁴⁵ A contingent of approximately five hundred Americans remained in Korea under the auspices of the Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG) to train South Korean forces. With the fall of the Chinese Nationalist Party, the communist takeover of China in 1949, and the fear of the communist actions in Berlin, Greece, Turkey, Iran, and Indochina, South Korea found itself further outside the defensive perimeter of the United States.⁴⁶

Tension continued to grow after the divided peninsula failed to conduct elections to unite the country. North Korea, with Soviet permission, invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950 with the aim of uniting the country under its communist rule.⁴⁷ The battle hardened North Korean

⁴³ The United States provided equipment in the value of approximately 110 million dollars that equated to arm fifty thousand ROK soldiers.

⁴⁴ Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, 99.

⁴⁵ Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War*, 77; and, Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, 154.

⁴⁶ Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, 169.

⁴⁷ Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War*, 10. North Korea sought the Soviet Union's permission to attack South Korea due to its standing as the leader of communism and as its primary supporter. Russia's consent had several aims to include further isolating its borders and China from

People's Army (NKPA), which recently returned from fighting alongside the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in China, cut through South Korean defenses with little to no resistance.⁴⁸ NKPA forces seized the South Korean capital of Seoul, however the Republic of Korea (ROK) Army was able to destroy the bridges crossing Han River and took up defensive positions south of Seoul.

U.S. Entry into the Korean War

John J. Muccio, the United States Ambassador to South Korea, had his military attaché, Colonel Robert Edwards, request ammunition from the Far East Command to support South Korean forces. Upon learning of the North Korean attack, General MacArthur recommended additional weapons be added to the ammunition and sent to Korea immediately.⁴⁹ President Truman agreed with General MacArthur, approving the ammunition and weapons request and authorized aircraft to protect the evacuation of American citizens and a team to conduct a site survey in Korea.⁵⁰ Truman also authorized the movement of Seventh Fleet to relocate from the Philippines to Sasebo, Japan via the straits of Taiwan as a show of force to the communist government of China and provide naval gun and fixed wing support if needed.⁵¹

After North Korea failed to respond to the United Nations call to return to the 38th Parallel, the Security Council voted to support South Korea by recommending that, "U.N.

the U.S. Stalin surmised after China eliminated the Nationalist Chinese forces on Taiwan that the prospects of American recognition of the new Chinese regime would grow significantly. Conversely, Stalin was aware that Chinese support of North Korea actions would impede future relations between the two nations.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 161-162.

⁴⁹ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 99.

⁵⁰ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 115.

⁵¹ Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume Two*, 336; and, Glenn Paige, *1950: Truman's Decision: The United States enters the Korean War* (New York, NY: Chelsea House, 1970), 103.

member nations provide assistance to repel the armed attack.”⁵² Acting upon its containment policy and the fear of appearing weak, the United States entered the war on behalf of South Korea by providing air support.⁵³ General MacArthur, demonstrating early acts of future trends, quickly escalated the air campaign by authorizing air strikes north of the 38th Parallel although his guidance forbade him to do so until several days later.⁵⁴ On June 30, transport vessels arrived at the port of Pusan with the first load of ammunition and two days later, the KMAC returned to the fight joining their Korean partners.

General MacArthur ordered the creation and deployment of Task Force Smith, a five hundred man task force created from First Battalion, 21st Infantry.⁵⁵ Task Force Smith arrived in

⁵² United Nations Resolution 82, 25 June 1950 (*Withdrawal of North Korean Forces to the 38th Parallel*) <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/064/95/IMG/NR006495.pdf?OpenElement> (accessed 19 December 2011); and, Allen R. Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 117.

⁵³ John Gaddis. *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1982), 24; and, Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*, 257. The origin of the U.S. Policy of Containment is found in George Kennan’s 1947 Foreign Affairs article, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct.” Kennan’s article began as his “Long Telegram,” which he outlined opinions and views of the Soviets for the Department of Treasury. According to Kennan, the Soviet Union did not see the possibility for long-term peaceful coexistence with the capitalist world. These documents along with several events to include the detonation of the first Soviet atomic bomb in August 1949 resulted with the implementation of NSC-68 and what is known as the Truman Doctrine. The aim of this policy was the long term, patient, containment of Russia’s expansive tendencies.

⁵⁴ Paige, *1950: Truman’s Decision*, 150; and, Millett, *The War for Korea*, 130.

⁵⁵ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 25. Task Force Smith was an inexperienced four hundred man force, which was lightly equipped and with little to no instruction other than to block the North Korean advance as far north as possible, preferably north of Taejon. TF Smith was the lead element of the 24th ID who was scattered about Japan and had to deploy from six separate ports once vessels were obtained. Due to the lack of vessels, TF Smith flew to Pusan and its equipment consisted of six 105mm howitzers, four 60mm mortars, six 2.36-inch rocket launchers, two 75mm recoilless rifles, and the individual weapons each man carried. Additionally, TF Smith only had six antitank rounds and would face NKPA an armor brigade and a mechanized division. Regardless of the quantity of the American munitions, when fired, the U.S. munitions could not penetrate the Russian T34 tanks. Although the U.S. had developed improved rockets to destroy Russian tanks, they were never produced due to the emphasis on producing nuclear weapons and long-range bombers. The soldiers that made up Task Force Smith as well as the remainder of the occupation force in Japan were nothing more than a constabulary force with no training. Of the 400 soldiers in Task Force Smith, approximately 17% of the soldiers were combat veterans with the remaining soldiers only receiving basic training prior to deploying to Japan.

Pusan on July 2 and moved to Osan as the lead element of the 24th Infantry Division.⁵⁶ Task Force Smith assumed its defensive position on the Fourth of July and engaged the enemy on July 5 for approximately six and a half hours before falling back.⁵⁷ This scene would repeat itself for the next few months as American forces found themselves without armor or tank destroyers in their engagements with the NKPA forces despite the U.S. Air Force establishing air superiority on July 10.

On July 7, 1950, the United Nations requested the United States designate a commander for U.N. forces operating in Korea and President Truman selected General Douglas MacArthur, who was currently serving as the SCAP and CINC FECOM.⁵⁸ MacArthur requested and received several units between June 30 and August 19 and established the Eighth Army under the command of LTG Walton “Johnnie” Walker as the Field Army for U.N. forces.⁵⁹ In total, the Eighth Army received over sixty thousand soldiers as well as the necessary armored forces required to halt the communist offensive. Along with U.S. forces, LTG Walker commanded ROK forces numbering eighty-five thousand troops in four divisions and associated service troops as

⁵⁶ United States Army, *The First Ten Years: A Short History of the Eighth United States Army, 1944-1954*, XVIII.

⁵⁷ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 139; and, United States Army, *The First Ten Years: A Short History of the Eighth United States Army, 1944-1954*, 7.

⁵⁸ United Nations Resolution 83, June 25 1950 (*Request United States designate commander of U.N. Forces*) <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/064/97/IMG/NR006497.pdf?OpenElement> (accessed 19 December 2011); and, Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 143; and, Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 183. General MacArthur’s duties as the Supreme Allied Commander Japan (SCAP) entailed the supervision of the occupation of Japan to include providing security and enforcing post surrender policies established during the Potsdam Conference. As the Commander in Chief Far Eastern Command (CINC FECOM) General MacArthur exercised unified command over all forces allocated to him by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Allied Powers with particular consideration to the tactical requirements for protracted occupation of former enemy areas to include Japan, Korea, and the Philippines.

⁵⁹ United States Army, *The First Ten Years: A Short History of the Eighth United States Army, 1944-1954*, XVII. Headquarters, Eighth U.S. Army advance elements arrived at Taejon, Korea on July 7, 1950, while elements of the 24th Infantry Division’s Task Force Smith began arriving on 2 July. Additionally, elements of the 25th Infantry Division arrived on July 10, 1st Cavalry Division on 18 July, 2nd Infantry Division on July 31, 5th Regimental Combat Team on August 2nd, and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade on August 2nd.

well as KMAC officers and NCOs. LTG Walker's forces conducted a series of engagements, which essentially traded space for time before he established the Pusan perimeter. The Pusan perimeter enclosed was approximately five thousand square miles in area and ran along the Nakdong River east to the Sea of Japan and south to the Korean Strait.⁶⁰

Within the Pusan perimeter, forces and equipment continued to arrive and Walker now commanded eight divisions and three separate brigades. Eighth Army received six tank battalions by August giving the U.N. forces a three to one advantage over NKPA armor forces deployed to South Korea. The Eighth Army did not fare as well regarding artillery as they did not receive requisite batteries until 1951. Only divisional artillery units were at full strength, corps and Army field artillery units combined to consist of four general support battalions versus the Second World War standard of twenty-four battalions.⁶¹ The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) were unable to staff Walker's four divisions at wartime strength, as they were a combined thirty-three thousand soldiers below strength and averaged twenty-four hundred Korean Augmentees to the U.S. Army (KATUSAs) per division throughout the war. In August, the four American divisions in the Pusan Perimeter each had five thousand KATUSAs.⁶²

Nine divisions surrounded LTG Walker's perimeter as his forces and supplies continued to build in August and September. NKPA forces relentlessly attacked and probed the perimeter for six weeks despite the efforts of Fifth Air Force. The Fifth Air Force Bomber Command consisted of over one hundred and fifty aircraft and conducted over four thousand sorties dropping more than thirty-thousand tons of ordnance in support of operations on the Korean

⁶⁰ Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 166.

⁶¹ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 143.

⁶² Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 158. The Korean Augmentees to the U.S. Army (KATUSA) program provided American military units with Korean civilians to fill shortfalls in manning requirements of American divisions. Military planners envisioned KATUSAs as battle-buddies to GIs, however due to culture differences, lack of training, and communication problems, U.S. commanders found it best to utilize the KATUSAs in small teams with crew-served weapons and as unskilled laborers.

Peninsula between July 1 and the start of Operation Chromite, the U.N. landings at Inchon on September 15.⁶³ Additionally, NKPA forces contended with the Naktong River, which ranged from a quarter to a half mile in width and depths from six to ten feet.⁶⁴ In addition to the river and U.N. aircraft, the NKPA faced the formidable landscape surrounding the river, as the terrain rose twelve-hundred to twenty-five hundred feet above the river.

U.N. Amphibious Landings and Counterattack

General MacArthur envisioned a forced entry landing behind enemy lines in early July 1950, however the lack of support, equipment, training, and troops delayed the operation until September 15.⁶⁵ MacArthur needed to win over the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to gain President Truman's approval for the mission. The JCS were aware of the horrid conditions of the projected landing site. Inchon was a less than optimal choice due to the large mud flats, low tides, and natural and manmade barriers.⁶⁶ General MacArthur received approval for the mission after briefing the Army and Navy Chiefs of Staff in Japan due to the possibility of freeing Seoul, capturing the airfield of Kimpo, and destroying the NKPA. These actions would enable the JCS to meet their objective, defeat the NKPA, remove forces from the peninsula, and send an Army division to Europe.⁶⁷ Due to a lack of equipment, MacArthur needed to utilize landing craft for the assault that were being used by the Japanese to ferry commerce between its islands.

⁶³ Ibid., 170.

⁶⁴ Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 166; and, Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 173.

⁶⁵ Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 161.

⁶⁶ Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, 224.

⁶⁷ Schnabel, *Policy and Direction the First Year*, 212; and, Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 185. The Truman Administration, as well as the JCS believed that Europe was the center of gravity of the Cold War and the war in Korea was an attempt to distract and weaken the U.S. Additionally, General Bradley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was worried about the lack of American forces in Europe and saw the end of the Korean War as an opportunity to get another division into Europe.

Additionally, General MacArthur needed to pull soldiers from the Pusan Perimeter and bring them back to Japan to integrate them into the assault forces as well as train the landing forces.

Operation Chromite, the amphibious assault on Inchon met little resistance despite Russian and Chinese warnings to the North Korean President, Kim Il Sung.⁶⁸ General MacArthur created the X Corps from elements of his staff and assigned the First Marine Division and the Seventh Infantry Division as X Corps' major subordinate elements. X Corps was commanded by General MacArthur's Chief of Staff for FECOM, Major General (MG) Ned Almond and consisted of over seventy thousand soldiers from the U.S. Army, U.S. Marines, ROK Marines, and KATUSAs.⁶⁹ After the Inchon landings and Pusan breakout, X Corps remained a separate ground element and not under the command of the field Army thus gaining the moniker "MacArthur's own."⁷⁰

The amphibious landings supported by Naval and Air Force fighters and bombers, naval vessels and gunfire, Seabees, and other joint elements. Operation Chromite's mission was to, "seize Inchon and use it as a base for a campaign to capture Seoul and cut the major supply route to the NKPA to the south."⁷¹ The attack at Inchon and subsequent seizure of Kimpo Airfield allowed U.N. forces to position Fifth Air Force bombers and fighters on the peninsula, which would provide a greater number of sorties as well as time on station as the aircraft did not expend their fuel on the flight across the Sea of Japan. This additional loiter time allowed U.N. air forces to provide continuous support for the seizure of Seoul and the breakout of the Pusan Perimeter.⁷²

⁶⁸ Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War*, 103.

⁶⁹ Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 164.

⁷⁰ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 240.

⁷¹ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 240.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 230.

LTG Walker's plan for the breakout of the Pusan Perimeter was to coincide with the landings at Inchon attempting to create simultaneous actions that would overwhelm the NKPA forces. Walker's attack was delayed for twenty-four hours for the news of the Inchon landings to increase the morale of U.N. forces, while demoralizing the morale of the NKPA forces. However, NKPA soldiers taken prisoner on the September 16, 1950 were unaware of the Inchon landings.⁷³ The Eighth Army's plan was to attack from their current bridgehead positions, destroy enemy forces along their axis of advance, and link up with X Corps forces. Due to the Eighth Army being positioned in the defense for such a long period, units found it extremely hard to transition to the offensive. Additionally, simultaneous to the Eighth Army's attack was an attack from the NKPA, which slowed the U.N. breakout.⁷⁴

As Eighth Army forces were able to transition to the offensive, they found the NKPA front breaking down. The Pusan breakout was underway on September 19, 1950 and by September 23 NKPA forces were in a full retreat.⁷⁵ The "communist Army simply fell victim to the bludgeoning of the Eighth Army and the Fifth Air Force. The indication of defeat was the end of counterattacks after three days of battle."⁷⁶ Elements of X Corps and the Eighth Army's Task Force Lynch met vicinity of Osan on September 27.⁷⁷ Despite LTG Walker's instructions for the pursuit and destruction of NKPA forces, numerous enemy fighters faded into the countryside to become insurgents while approximately thirty-thousand NKPA forces retreated across the 38th Parallel.

⁷³ Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 224.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 224.

⁷⁵ Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 177.

⁷⁶ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 271.

⁷⁷ Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 225; and, United States Army, *The First Ten Years: A Short History of the Eighth United States Army, 1944-1954*, 19.

With United Nations in control of South Korea and the South Korean political establishment operating again, U.N. forces were called to move north of the 38th Parallel. MacArthur's genius, which the Inchon landings solidified, began showing cracks as he planned for operations north of the 38th Parallel. MacArthur's strategy had Eighth Army forces attacking west of Seoul, across the 38th parallel, and capturing Pyongyang, the North Korean capital. Simultaneously, X Corps would conduct an amphibious landing on the east coast of North Korea at the port city of Wonsan.

ROK forces were integrated into MacArthur's east coast plans, however, they would travel overland. In spite of the mode of movement, they would arrive in Wonsan prior to U.N. forces.⁷⁸ MacArthur's requirement for amphibious landings for the First Marine Division and Seventh Infantry Division caused numerous delays for X Corps as well as the Eighth Army. The Eighth Army was reliant on the Port of Inchon for its supplies, equipment, and reinforcements, however the First Marine Division was the port's priority and required to upload its supplies, equipment, and personnel for the Wonsan landing. The Seventh Infantry Division was required to travel south from Seoul to the port of Pusan to upload for the amphibious landing, but the entire movement was slowed as they flowed against the northbound traffic. Additionally, Wonsan was mined, a fact known by the Navy and X Corps, but no one informed General MacArthur, finding it easier to deal with the mines.⁷⁹ The obstacles delayed the Marines assault and redirected the

⁷⁸ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 281.

⁷⁹ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 281. Millett asserts during the planning for the amphibious landings at Wonsan that MG Almond, the X Corps Commander, MG Wright, the FECOM G3, and Admiral Joy, the Commander of Far East Naval forces were aware of the Russian mining of Wonsan's harbor. However, only Joy attempted to change MacArthur's mind, but MacArthur would not answer or return Joy's calls to discuss the matter. Almond and Wright had access to MacArthur, but they would not push MacArthur on the issue. The entire group, including MacArthur was aware that Wonsan Harbor contained an estimated 3,000 mines and that the UN Naval Task Force's countermining fleet consisted of ten vessels.

Seventh Infantry Division's landing site to Iwon. Again, the ROK I Corps, moving overland greeted the Seventh Infantry Division as it debarked at Iwon.

Communist Chinese Forces enter War

U.N. forces continued their offensive to the Yalu River from the eastern and western coasts of the Korean Peninsula. On October 25, 1950, elements of the First ROK Division began encountering Chinese troops near Unsan, North Korea.⁸⁰ Over the next month ROK forces and other U.N. forces began capturing several prisoners dressed in NKPA uniforms, but the prisoners spoke Chinese, not Korean. The following day, October 26, the ROK Seventh Infantry Division reached the Yalu River, however they encountered a large enemy force near the town of Ch'osan, and fought a brief, but intense battle.⁸¹ These units engaged the initial elements of the "First Phase Offensive" by Communist Chinese Forces (CCF).⁸²

Mass confusion reigned over U.N. forces as they were unaware of what and whom they were engaging. The units on the ground accurately depicted the entry of the CCF, while the FECOM staff refused to believe the intelligence they were given. After several large units from the United States and South Korea were engaged and destroyed, the Chinese broke contact on November 6, 1950, further confusing the ground elements and the Far East Command. By early November the "First Phase Offensive" appeared to be over, however with the U.N. offensive towards the Yalu halted as the Eighth Army consolidated its units to stave off the possibility of being cut off from the south and attacked from the north. General MacArthur ordered the offensive to resume on November 24 once lines were consolidated with the objective of the

⁸⁰ Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 287.

⁸¹ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 289.

⁸² Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 196.

“Yalu, or a few miles south of it, the U.N. could form a defensive line and hold all of Korea, come what may.”⁸³

The ebb and flow of the Korean War changed significantly after the CCF, supported by Soviet Union aircraft and weapons systems, intervened with the “Second Phase Offensive” on November 25 in the Eighth Army area of operations and on November 28 in the X Corps area of operations. The “Second Phase Offensive” was launched as a counter attack to the U.N. Home-by-Christmas offensive.⁸⁴ The infusion of Chinese and NKPA forces created a gap between the Eighth Army and X Corps. The gap threatened the right flank of the Eighth Army, fearing envelopment, U.N. forces to fell back repeatedly, as the U.N. was outmanned 110,000 to 356,000 or over a three to one advantage in favor of the CCF.⁸⁵ The separation in the U.N.’s line caused the X Corps to evacuate by sea from Hungnam and Wonsan along with ninety-one thousand refugees and seventeen-thousand pieces of equipment by the U.S. Navy.⁸⁶

In disarray, Eighth Army forces conducted a retrograde operation south to Pyongyang and then again to the 38th Parallel with the goal of defending Seoul. During the retrograde LTG Walker planned a series of defensive lines south of Seoul to include reestablishing the Pusan Perimeter.⁸⁷ Concurrently, General MacArthur made several requests to the JCS for additional troops and to lift restrictions on targets north of the Yalu River, however only the Air Force’s “hot pursuit” policy was approved.⁸⁸ As Eighth Army forces continued to build their defense vicinity the 38th Parallel, the CCF planned the “Third Phase Offensive” to commence on New

⁸³ Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 199.

⁸⁴ Korea Institute of Military History. *The Korean War*, 220-221.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 283.

⁸⁶ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 73.

⁸⁷ Appleman, *Disaster in Korea*, 356-357.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 363.

Year's Eve with the objective of capturing Seoul.⁸⁹ Facing the CCF offensive, the Eighth Army commander, LTG Walton "Johnnie" Walker died in a vehicle accident on December 24, 1950 leaving the exposed Army vulnerable and leaderless.

Section III

Ridgway Selected as Eighth Army Commander

*Where toughness was required, Ridgway was tough, where persuasion was indicated, he persuaded, and where personal example was needed, he set the example.*⁹⁰

General Matthew Bunker Ridgway, son of Regular Army Field Artillery Colonel Thomas R. Ridgway, was born in 1895 at Fort Monroe, Virginia.⁹¹ Matthew Ridgway entered the United States Military Academy at West Point on June 14, 1913 and graduated in 1917 with a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Infantry.⁹² Ridgway did not participate in the First World War, but served in numerous positions in Texas, China, Nicaragua, and the Panama Canal after its conclusion. During the interwar period, Ridgway attended the Infantry Advanced Course at Ft. Benning, GA, the Command and General Staff School at Ft. Leavenworth, KS, and the Army War College at Carlisle, PA. Ridgway continued to rise through the ranks and in January 1942, he was promoted to Brigadier General and assigned as the deputy commander of the 82nd Airborne Division.⁹³

Within months of his arrival to the 82nd Airborne Division, the Commanding Officer, Major General Omar N. Bradley was reassigned to command the 28th Infantry Division, and

⁸⁹ Korea Institute of Military History. *The Korean War*, 343.

⁹⁰ Schnabel, *Policy and Direction the First Year*, 308.

⁹¹ Paul M. Edwards, *General Matthew B. Ridgway: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), xv.

⁹² *Ibid.*, xxi.

⁹³ Edwards, *General Matthew B. Ridgway*, xxiii.

General Ridgway assumed command of the All-American Division. Ridgway commanded the division during the North African Campaign, the Sicilian Campaign, the Italian Campaign, and during Operation Overlord, where he participated in the airborne assault with his division. General Ridgway assumed command of the Eighteenth Airborne Corps in August 1944 leading the Sky Dragons during numerous operations in the European Theater to include the Battle of the Bulge.⁹⁴ General Ridgway redeployed his Corps to the United States to prepare for an airborne operation in Japan that would never happen.

After the conclusion of the Second World War Ridgway found himself in several key positions that complemented his pre-war education and tactical and operational skills he acquired in his various commands before and during the Second World War. Ridgway commanded the Mediterranean Theater of Operations and the Caribbean Defense Command after the Second World War concluded and gained essential experience working with joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational organizations. Additionally, Ridgway served as a military staff member to the United Nations and a military aid to the President of Mexico during the 1947 Pan American Conference.⁹⁵ Prior to his assignment as the Eighth Army Commander Ridgway served as the U.S. Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Administration and was "the principle advisor and effectively was the operations officer for the Army's role in Korea."⁹⁶ James F. Schnabel's *Policy and Direction the First Year* states, "No American outside the Far East knew more about the Korean situation than General Ridgway. In his position as U.S. Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Administration all reports, studies, and recommendations on Korea at the national level had passed through his hands."⁹⁷ These key

⁹⁴ Bradbeer, *Setting the Stage: Korea, December 1950*, 232.

⁹⁵ Edwards, *General Matthew B. Ridgway*, xxiv.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, xxx.

⁹⁷ Schnabel, *Policy and Direction the First Year*, 306.

developmental positions and his sound education prepared Ridgway to operate efficiently and effectively as an operational and theater commander during the Korean War.

LTG Matthew B. Ridgway was notified of LTG Walker's death on the night of December 22, 1950, while at a Christmas Party with his wife, Penny. General Collins, the U.S. Army Chief of Staff informed LTG Ridgway that he would Command the Eighth Army and he would need to depart for Korea immediately.⁹⁸ After returning home, Ridgway could not sleep and began to envision his operational construct, as he was fully aware of the trials and tribulations within the Eighth Army.⁹⁹ After the arduous trip from Washington, D.C., Ridgway met with General MacArthur in Japan to receive his instructions and answers to the questions that Ridgway developed during the flight. MacArthur told Ridgway that the best he could hope for was a tactical success, possibly holding and defending South Korea. He remarked, "We are now operating in a mission vacuum while diplomacy attempts to feel its way. . . . Any substantial military success by the Eighth Army would greatly strengthen the hands of the diplomats."¹⁰⁰ Most importantly, MacArthur gave Ridgway control of the X Corps and empowered and expected him to plan and carry out all military operations of the United Nations forces in Korea when he stated, "the Eighth Army is yours, Matt. Do what you think best."¹⁰¹

Ridgway's Initial Operational Construct

LTG Ridgway derived his initial operational construct from a prolonged analysis of the current operational environment and guidance received from national leaders and the theater commander, General MacArthur. Due to Ridgway's previous assignment, he was extremely

⁹⁸ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 79.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 80.

¹⁰⁰ Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 567.

¹⁰¹ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 83; and, Schnabel, *Policy and Direction the First Year*, 306.

familiar with the strategic, operational, and tactical environment surrounding the Korean War. He provided daily update and status briefings to the Army Chief of Staff and on numerous occasions he briefed President Truman on the situation in Korea. Prior to his selection as the Commander of the Amphibious Eighth, Ridgway found himself on numerous trips to Korea as the Army Chief of Staff's representative to identify equipment issues, soldier and officer shortfalls, and general problems. These trips and the requirement to provide daily briefings to national leadership provided Ridgway with a sound understanding of the strategic and operational environment as well as the strategic aims of the administration.

Ridgway found himself in a precarious situation, as he knew that his superiors, President Truman and General MacArthur "held diametrically opposing views about what to do in Korea. Truman being in favor of a limited war, a negotiated settlement restoring the status quo ante bellum and MacArthur being opposed to negotiations and favoring unlimited war against Red China. Ridgway was sympathetic to MacArthur's views, but his duty – and oath of office – demanded that he carry out the wishes of his civilian authority: Commander in Chief Truman."¹⁰² Ridgway knew what was expected of him, restore the morale and fighting spirit of the Eighth Army, keep the Eighth Army on the peninsula, restore the 38th Parallel, and inflict as much destruction on the CCF as possible to force the communists to the negotiating table.¹⁰³ Ridgway recognized that he needed the Eighth Army to return to the offensive as soon as possible, with this thought in mind during his flight from Japan to Korea he set out to gauge the capabilities within his command as soon as he touched down in Pusan.

Upon arrival in Korea, Ridgway's immediate concerns were to meet with his corps and division commanders, however he needed to assure the South Korean President, Syngman Rhee

¹⁰² Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 568.

¹⁰³ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 108.

that he was in Korea to stay, not to withdraw forces back to Japan.¹⁰⁴ After meeting with President Rhee and gaining Rhee's confidence, Ridgway acted on information gained from the meeting with President Rhee and U.S. Ambassador to South Korea, John J. Muccio and ordered the movement of the Second Infantry Division to a blocking position vicinity of Wonju.¹⁰⁵ LTG Ridgway then turned his attention to his Army and set out to evaluate its capabilities. After meeting with two of his Corps Commanders and surveying the corps and divisions situations, Ridgway found his Army mentally, but not physically, defeated. Ridgway found the U.N. forces in disarray, corps and division command posts were so far from the front that they could not influence the fight. Equally disturbing was the lack of intelligence, gaps between units, defeatist attitudes, and nonexistence of offensive planning. Ridgway determined the problem as a lack of initiative, understanding, and poor leadership as the CCF "Second Phased Offensive" failed to destroy the U.N. forces most critical asset, soldiers.¹⁰⁶ Ridgway's initial desired state was to return the Eighth Army into an offensive force by counterattacking and reestablishing the 38th Parallel immediately. However, Ridgway realized the Army's current condition would not allow it to take the offensive as soon as he desired.¹⁰⁷

Within days of his arrival into theater, the CCF commenced their "Third Phase Offensive" or New Year's Offensive with the goal of driving U.N. forces below the Han River to set conditions for the Spring Offensive, which would subsequently expel U.N. forces from the peninsula.¹⁰⁸ Ridgway was forced to withdraw forces south of the Han River and assume

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 84.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 85.

¹⁰⁶ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 378.

¹⁰⁷ Roy E. Appleman, *Ridgway Duels for Korea* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1990), 6.

¹⁰⁸ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 381.

defensive positions that would repel the CCF attack.¹⁰⁹ Due to poor senior leadership within his command, Ridgway remained in the corps and division area to influence morale and develop leadership. The Eighth Army Commander co-located his advance command post with I Corps command post and used the retrograde operation as a lesson to commanders and soldiers. Units conducted an organized mutual supporting withdrawal instead of a “bug out” resulting in minimal loss of equipment and lives and building confidence within units, leaders, and soldiers. Additionally, Ridgway’s ability to synchronize Corps retrograde operations and implement fire support plans inflicted extreme losses on the CCF, while simultaneously increasing the morale of the Eighth Army.

General Ridgway utilized the time in the defense to integrate X Corps, replacement personnel, and equipment into the Eighth Army. While in the defense, the Eighth Army tripled the number of field artillery tubes from four battalions consisting of 78 tubes to sixteen battalions consisting of 240 tubes.¹¹⁰ Additionally, Ridgway met with President Rhee regarding the lackluster performance of the ROK forces, Rhee responded by talking to ROK forces and ensuring Ridgway that ROK forces would fight in the future. General Ridgway also counseled ROK Generals ensuring them that the future holds better times and their role is critical for the defense of South Korea.¹¹¹ While the JCS and MacArthur traded messages over the evacuation of the peninsula, Ridgway was preparing to conduct offensive operations to eliminate gaps in his defensive line and to determine the strength of CCF across the Han River.¹¹²

LTG Ridgway, unlike LTG Walker, operated autonomously from the General Headquarters in Japan. In an attempt to divorce himself from a self-perceived “no win situation,”

¹⁰⁹ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 96.

¹¹⁰ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 379.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 380.

¹¹² Appleman, *Ridgway Duels for Korea*, 143.

General MacArthur turned over full control of military operations to LTG Ridgway, making Ridgway the theater operational and Army tactical commander of operations in Korea.¹¹³ These newly found duties included tasking and integrating tactical air and naval fires into ground operations. With a sound understanding of his authority, capabilities, and constraints, Ridgway began an iterative process to make sense of the enemy and changes within the environment, an action similar to what contemporary doctrine defines as reframing.¹¹⁴ Due to the strategic objective changing because of the entry of CCF, Ridgway needed to adopt an operational approach that ensured tactical actions remained fundamentally linked to achieving the desired condition of forcing a negotiated settlement. To develop an optimal operational approach, Ridgway utilized a technique similar to Army Design Methodology to guide the conceptual planning and inform detailed planning.¹¹⁵

An examination of Army Design Methodology's four goals and the actions taken by Ridgway reveals that he utilized a design-like methodology to provide reasoning and logic to guide his detailed planning and ultimately his operational approach.¹¹⁶ Through his experience with Korea, the update and initial guidance provided by MacArthur, and his battlefield circulation and staff updates, LTG Ridgway was able to frame the environment. By utilizing the iterative

¹¹³ Bradbeer, *Setting the Stage, Korea, December 1950*, 233.

¹¹⁴ Headquarters United States Army, *Field Manual 5.0 Change 1: The Operations Process* (Washington D.C.: Headquarters Department of the Army, 2011) 3-12. Reframing is a shift in understanding that leads to a new perspective on the problems or their resolution. Reframing involves significantly refining or discarding the hypotheses or models that form the basis of the design concept. At any time during the operations process, the decision to reframe can stem from significant changes to understanding, the conditions of the operational environment, or the end state. Generally, reframing is triggered in three ways: a major event causes a "catastrophic change" in the operational environment, a scheduled periodic review shows a problem, or an assessment and reflection challenges understanding of the existing problem and the relevance of the operational approach.

¹¹⁵ Headquarters United States Army, *Field Manual 5.0 Change 1: The Operations Process*, 3-1. Army Design Methodology is a process for applying critical and creative thinking to understand, visualize, and describe complex, ill-structured problems and develop approaches to solve them.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 3-2. The four design goals include understanding ill-structured problems, anticipating change, creating opportunities, and recognizing and managing transitions.

process of framing the environment, Ridgway was able to make sense of the ill-structured problem facing the Eighth Army. Ridgway's understanding enabled him to reduce the complex effects of fighting a limited war against a superior force with limited means.

As noted above, within days of Ridgway's arrival into theater, the CCF commenced their Third Phase Offensive and drove U.N. forces below the Han River.¹¹⁷ After assuming defensive positions south of the Han River, Ridgway ordered subordinate units to send out reconnaissance units to determine the enemy's locations and their strength. Ridgway discovered that communist forces attacked until they culminated and then fell back to refit. Anticipating these enemy tactics, Ridgway ordered his units to maintain contact and defend with an "elasticity" type defense allowing the enemy to gain terrain when he attacked. Ridgway's technique was not to defend at all costs, but to draw the enemy into culmination and then to counterattack and to use his overwhelming artillery, air, and naval fire to inflict as much destruction as possible. These enemy patterns and the ability to identify and correct the internal problems of poor leadership, morale, logistics, and intelligence assisted Ridgway in anticipating the transition from defensive to offensive operations. Through framing the problem and instituting appropriate changes in the Eighth Army, Ridgway achieved the goal of anticipating change by successfully transitioning into the offensive.

LTG Ridgway created opportunities by providing a clear and concise initial intent to his commanders and a clear understanding of what and why the Eighth Army was fighting for to his soldiers. Current Army Doctrine states that the commander creates opportunity by countering complexity using the initial commander's intent to foster initiative and freedom of action.¹¹⁸ Ridgway's initial meeting with his subordinate commanders sought to create proactive, mutually

¹¹⁷ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 381.

¹¹⁸ Headquarters United States Army, *Field Manual 5.0 Change 1: The Operations Process*, 3-3.

supporting, cohesive units that acted promptly and swiftly as they encountered opportunities. LTG Ridgway's January 21, 1951 message to the troops titled, *Why are we here?* was composed for two reasons. First, it meant to combat the message General MacArthur's provided the media regarding the continued debates with the Truman administration and the need to evacuate the peninsula.¹¹⁹ Secondly, Ridgway sought ensure every soldier in his command understood the purpose behind what the Eighth Army was fighting for.¹²⁰ Thus, Ridgway's ability to create opportunities by minimizing complexity through the use of his initial intent and a shared understanding and purpose set in motion the actions that allowed U.N. forces to act purposefully and effectively for the remainder of the campaign.¹²¹

Ridgway used the understanding developed from the environmental frame combined with the problem frame to raise morale, create unity of effort, and develop the confidence necessary to successfully transition to a direct operational approach. LTG Ridgway's operational approach, developed from utilizing a design-like methodology was aimed at destroying the enemy center of gravity, the CCF, rather than capturing terrain, which provided no military advantage.¹²² LTG Ridgway's knack of formulating effective solution to complex problems, based his new approach on inflicting "maximum damage on the enemy with minimum to ourselves, the maintaining of all major units intact, and a careful avoidance of being sucked into an enemy trap – by ruse or as a result of our own aggressiveness – to be destroyed piecemeal. We were to pursue only to the point where we were still able to provide powerful support or at least manage a timely disengagement and local withdrawal."¹²³ The successful execution of Operation Killer and

¹¹⁹ Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 648-649.

¹²⁰ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 264-265.

¹²¹ Headquarters United States Army, *Field Manual 5.0 Change 1: The Operations Process*, 3-13.

¹²² Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 109.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 108.

successive operations validated Ridgway's new operational approach. Without doubt, LTG Ridgway's application of incremental changes in the Eighth Army led to the successful transition and execution of the new operational approach, which achieved the fourth goal of design, recognizing and managing transitions.

LTG Ridgway's operational design enabled him to construct an approach utilizing the minimal means available to obtain the limited goals of the Korean War set by the political establishment. General MacArthur's failure to apply a cognitive methodology similar to LTG Ridgway resulted in his continued requests for additional U.S. and foreign troops, blockades of sovereign territory, and employing nuclear weapons, rather than utilizing the means available to obtain the new strategic aims. MacArthur's inability to construct an operational approach that ensured tactical actions remained fundamentally linked to the strategic objective of forcing a negotiated settlement resulted in a civil-military conflict that sharply divided the nation and resulted in the removal of a national leader from power.¹²⁴

Section IV

*The way to win an atomic war is to make certain it never starts.*¹²⁵

MacArthur Relieved

General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan, Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command in Korea, and Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Army Forces Far East, began his Army career in 1903 after graduating from the United States Military Academy at West Point.¹²⁶ General MacArthur's distinguished military career spanned six decades and he was a recipient of the Medal of Honor. MacArthur's long list of

¹²⁴ Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 498.

¹²⁵ Charlton, James. *The Military Quotation Book* (New York, NY: St. Martin Press, 2002), 116. General Omar Bradley's speech to the Boston Chamber of Commerce in 1948.

¹²⁶ MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 27.

professional achievements includes serving as the Army Chief of Staff during the interwar period and being one of five men to rise to the rank of General of the Army.¹²⁷ Furthermore, MacArthur served as the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in the Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA) during the Second World War and he had the honor of accepting the formal surrender of Japan, which ended the Second World War.¹²⁸ MacArthur remained in Japan after its capitulation, serving as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Army Forces Far East (FECOM), and de facto military governor overseeing Japan's reconstruction.

Although South Korea was outside the U.S. Far East defense perimeter, President Truman directed General MacArthur to provide naval and air support to South Korean forces after the initial North Korean attack on June 25, 1950.¹²⁹ In the days following the North Korean invasion, the U.N. recommended nation members furnish assistance to repel the armed attack.¹³⁰ Shortly thereafter, the U.N. requested that President Truman appoint a commander for all U.N. forces, Truman selected General MacArthur.¹³¹ MacArthur responded to Truman's appointment with a memorandum dated July 11, 1950, personally thanking him for the new expression of confidence. The general recalled the first time the president bestowed such confidence in him when Truman appointed MacArthur as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in

¹²⁷ Geoffrey Perret, *Old Soldiers Never Die: The Life of Douglas MacArthur* (Holbrook, MA: Random House, 1996), 144.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 478-479.

¹²⁹ Joint Chiefs of Staff to General Douglas MacArthur, June 29, 1950, Korean War Folder, Truman Papers, Truman Library, http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/korea/large/documents/pdfs/ki-3-19.pdf#zoom=100, (accessed 14 January 2012).

¹³⁰ United Nations, Security Council Resolutions 1950, Resolution 83, dated June 27, 1950, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/064/96/IMG/NR006496.pdf?OpenElement>, (accessed 14 January 2012).

¹³¹ "Statement by the President Announcing the Designation of General MacArthur to Lead the Allied Military Forces in Korea;" Message 189; Truman Papers; Truman Library, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/publicpapers/index.php?pid=817&st=korea&st1=>, (accessed 14 January 2012).

Japan.¹³² MacArthur continued by stating, “I can only repeat the pledge of my complete personal loyalty to you as well as an absolute devotion to your monumental struggle for peace and good will throughout the world. I hope I will not fail you.”¹³³

MacArthur may have fully intended to give the president his pledge of loyalty and absolute devotion, however limitations placed on the number and nationality of troops, rules of engagement, and the administration’s desire to limit hostilities to the peninsula appeared to change MacArthur’s previously desired intent. General MacArthur was seventy years old and his views of the world and events became increasingly biased and political in nature. He was after all a five-star general and in effect the ruler of Japan. MacArthur was an advocate for an Asia first policy, seeing the Korean War “as an opportunity to direct new attention toward Asia in the United States. It also gave him a chance to act out his destiny, first on the battlefield, then perhaps in the White House.”¹³⁴ Additionally, MacArthur believed that Asia was where the Kremlin sought to achieve world domination by expansion and ultimately, total war. Conversely, the Truman administration held the belief that Europe was the center of gravity of the Cold War and the Korean War as an attempt by the Soviets to weaken American power and divert attention from Europe.¹³⁵

General MacArthur served in every significant position an officer can hold in the Army. During the First World War, MacArthur achieved the rank of Brigadier General and served as a division commander, while President Truman was only a Captain, a fact that MacArthur never forgot. At the conclusion of the Second World War, Truman requested MacArthur’s presence in

¹³² Douglas MacArthur to Harry Truman, July 11, 1950, Korean War Folder, Truman Papers, Truman Library, http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/koreanwar/index.php, (accessed 14 January 2012).

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, 189.

¹³⁵ Schnabel, *Policy and Direction the First Year*, 212

Washington twice to personally thank him for his service and outline the administration's policy for the Far East. The first request occurred on September 17, 1945 and the second request on October 19, 1945, on both occasions MacArthur declined, stating when the delicate and difficult situation in Japan stabilized to an acceptable level, he would return home.¹³⁶ Similarly, the Secretary of Defense, George Marshall, requested MacArthur return to the United States and meet with President Truman after the successful Inchon landings and expulsion of NPKA forces from Seoul and South Korea. Grudgingly, MacArthur requested the meeting be held at Wake Island rather than a more central location such as Hawaii, making the President, SECDEF, and JCS travel further and appear politically weaker.¹³⁷

The Wake Island meeting was an attempt by the President to achieve a better working relationship with MacArthur since the war appeared to be coming to a rapid conclusion as U.N. forces raced through North Korea. The President did not want further incidents such as the accidental bombing of a Soviet airbase in Siberia prolonging or expanding the campaign.¹³⁸ A point of discussion during the meeting was about the possibility of Communist Chinese or Soviet forces entering the conflict, MacArthur estimated that this was an unlikely course of action. MacArthur surmised that the Chinese had troops, but no air force and the Soviets could not place troops in Korea during the winter and their air force was inferior.¹³⁹ President Truman asked if MacArthur foresaw a combined Chinese ground and Russian air force intervention, MacArthur replied, "That it would be of no danger because it just would not work."¹⁴⁰ At the conclusion of the meeting, MacArthur refused to have lunch with Truman and administration members, staring

¹³⁶ Harry Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume One* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday), 520-521.

¹³⁷ Higgins, *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur*, 57.

¹³⁸ Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*, 111.

¹³⁹ Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume Two*, 265.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 266.

at his watch and stating that he had many pressing issues to attend too.¹⁴¹ MacArthur's discontent was evident, as he could not depart without one last attempt to upstage the President by making it appear that Truman's business was less voluminous and pressing than his.¹⁴²

This would be the first and last meeting between President Truman and General MacArthur as tensions, friction, and insubordination between the field commander and presidential policy resulted in MacArthur's dismissal on April 12, 1951.¹⁴³ MacArthur's disregard for military subordination to policy can be traced to the conclusion of the Second World War. Without clearing his remarks through the JCS or President, MacArthur informed the press that the strength of the U.S. occupation forces in Japan could be trimmed to two hundred thousand men, thus affecting the position the administration could take.¹⁴⁴ General MacArthur's rejection of the administration's policy during the Korean War was apparent within days of the North Korean invasion as MacArthur disobeyed orders from the JCS when he authorized U.S. aircraft to bomb airfields in North Korea on June 27, 1950.¹⁴⁵

This pattern of disregard for orders and directives continued throughout MacArthur's tenure as the commander of UNCOM. On numerous occasions, MacArthur was ordered to retract statements and memorandums and to clear all statements through the JCS before releasing them to the press, to no avail.¹⁴⁶ The domestic political situation between Truman and the controlling Republican Party caused the president to respond carefully to the field commander. These circumstances led to the president's January 13, 1951 letter to MacArthur explaining the political

¹⁴¹ Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*, 112.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 284.

¹⁴⁴ Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume One*, 520.

¹⁴⁵ Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, 180.

¹⁴⁶ Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*, 203-206.

objectives and implications of the administration's policy.¹⁴⁷ Perhaps out of frustration due to his calls of escalation being denied, MacArthur again challenged presidential policy preempting President Truman's peace initiative by calling for the Chinese surrender or face destruction on March 24, 1951.¹⁴⁸ Out of patience and options, President Truman relieved MacArthur due to his failure to comply with presidential directives and support for the policies of the U.S. and U.N.¹⁴⁹

General MacArthur's requests to escalate operations beyond the rules of engagement authorized by the administration were evident from the second day of the conflict when MacArthur sent aircraft across the border to bomb North Korean airfields. MacArthur continued his blatant disregard as he directed forces across the 38th Parallel and utilized U.N. troops in the provinces bordering Manchuria. MacArthur's reaction to the influx of CCF was not to reassess his situation and devise an alternate operational approach, but rather called for the use of nuclear weapons, a blockade of Chinese ports, and the bombing of Chinese Communist bases in Manchuria. Additionally, MacArthur called for Chinese Nationalist forces to fight alongside U.N. forces and also open a second front and fight the Chinese in South China.¹⁵⁰

After these requests were denied, the field commander wanted an additional four divisions, although only the U.S. strategic reserve was available, a fact MacArthur was aware of.¹⁵¹ By requesting and requiring more forces than were available, MacArthur in essence invalidated the administration's policies.¹⁵² General MacArthur then embellished the tactical situation in an attempt to gain the JCS's support for a series of stronger actions against the

¹⁴⁷ Higgins, *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur*, 97-99.

¹⁴⁸ Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 797.

¹⁴⁹ "Statement and Order by the President on Relieving General MacArthur of His Commands;" Dated April 11, 1951; Message 77; Truman Papers; Truman Library, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/publicpapers/index.php?pid=289&st=korea&st1=> (accessed 14 January 2012).

¹⁵⁰ Schnabel, *Policy and Direction the First Year*, 284.

¹⁵¹ Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 273.

¹⁵² Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume Two*, 433-434.

Chinese.¹⁵³ MacArthur would not adhere to and was unable to support the administration's policy due to a fundamental difference in opinion and objectives. The objective of the administration's policy was to deter the Kremlin from attempting to achieve world domination by resorting to total war, rather than settling issues through negotiation.¹⁵⁴ According to General Ridgway in *The Korean War*,

In MacArthur's description of victory, he did not mean merely victory in Korea – the destruction of all hostile forces on the peninsula and the unification of the country under a democratic government. What he envisaged was no less than the global defeat of Communism, dealing Communism “a blow from which it would never recover” and which would mark the historical turning back of the Red Tide. His “program” included not merely driving to the Yalu, but destroying the air bases and industrial complex in Manchuria; blockading Communist China's seacoast; demolishing its industrial center; providing all necessary support to Chiang's invasion of the mainland; and the transportation of the Nationalist Chinese troops to Korea to beef up our ground forces there. He sincerely believed that these moves would break the Communist hold on the mainland.¹⁵⁵

Aware of MacArthur's core beliefs, perhaps President Truman should have followed his instincts, taken General Eisenhower's advice, and not assign MacArthur as the UNCOM Commander.¹⁵⁶ President Truman would learn from his mistake and no longer assign military commanders based on seniority, but rather base selections on recommendations, leadership abilities, and potential, thus his reasoning of LTG Matthew Ridgway's selection to replace the “American Caesar.”¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Higgins, *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur*, 96.

¹⁵⁴ Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*, 257.

¹⁵⁵ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 145.

¹⁵⁶ Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume Two*, 355.

¹⁵⁷ Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 271; and, Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 802; and, William Manchester, *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur 1880 – 1964* (New York: NY: Dell Publishing, 1978), 11. President Truman was warned against placing a senior officer such as General MacArthur in a position such as UNCOM due to political alliances, ego, and previous discretions. President Truman received recommendations for LTG Ridgway to succeed General MacArthur from Secretary of Defense Marshall, CJCS General Bradley, and Army CoS, General Collins due to his previous record and potential. Additionally, Ridgway's selection was in accordance with the U.S. Army's policy of grooming “younger” men for positions of high responsibility. Lastly, the term “American Caesar” was the title of a book on the life of General Douglas MacArthur written by William Manchester.

Ridgway Assumes Command

President Truman selected LTG Ridgway to succeed General MacArthur as commander of UNCOM, FECOM, and SCAP prior to relieving MacArthur on April 11, 1951. According to President Truman,

General Ridgway did not always agree with policy or with the JCS, but he was meticulous in carrying out directives. He took firm and effective hold in Japan. There had been some people in Japan who had predicted trouble in Japan because of the great admiration the Japanese people had come to hold for General MacArthur. However, General Ridgway's calm and efficient manner assured the continued success of the occupation. The change over proved to the Japanese people that in a democracy the civilian authorities are above the military, the generals are not, like their own wartime leaders, a law unto themselves, and that they must carry out what the elected officials of the government tell them to do.¹⁵⁸

LTG Ridgway's selection as MacArthur's replacement came on the same day as Operation Dauntless was initiated. Dauntless' objective was "to destroy enemy and equipment, keep enemy units in front of I and IX corps off-balance, and advance those two corps toward the Utah line, which, if attained, would create a salient of about 12 miles north of the 38th Parallel."¹⁵⁹ Although Operation Dauntless was underway, Ridgway flew to meet with MacArthur on April 12, 1951 to review the scope and range of his responsibilities and refine his operational construct.¹⁶⁰ LTG Ridgway returned to Korea on the evening April 12 after meeting with MacArthur to oversee Operation Dauntless, continue the preparation of a defensive in depth, and plan the possible withdrawal of current positions due to the expected CCF Spring Offensive.¹⁶¹ Upon returning to Korea, Ridgway was informed by Secretary of the Army, Frank Pace, that LTG James Van Fleet would be replacing him as the commander of the Eighth Army.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume Two*, 454.

¹⁵⁹ Appleman, *Disaster in Korea*, 417.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 433.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 803.

Ridgway's Second Operational Construct

LTG Ridgway derived his second operational construct from several sources including his experience as the commander of the Mediterranean Theater of Operations and the Caribbean Defense Command at the conclusion of the Second World War. Additionally, Ridgway's service as the U.S. Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Administration provided him with daily interaction with senior civilian and military leadership and a front row seat to view the Cold War as it moved into high gear with Russia's detonation of a nuclear device.¹⁶³ Lastly, Ridgway obtained his operational construct as the FECOM commander from his experience in Korea, discussions with his predecessor, the FECOM staff, civilian leadership assigned to the Japanese and Korean embassies, foreign dignitaries, and his personal reconnaissance.¹⁶⁴

LTG Ridgway was disappointed with the early selection of a replacement, as it was customary for the theater commander to provide input in such matters before a candidate was selected.¹⁶⁵ Additionally, LTG Van Fleet was two years senior to Ridgway and there appeared ambiguous wording in message informing Ridgway that Van Fleet's assignment was "for such duties as you may direct."¹⁶⁶ When LTG Ridgway inquired to the vague statement, he was informed the language was included to "cover our thought that you would probably desire to designate Van Fleet as your Deputy Commander, retaining direct command in the field yourself,

¹⁶³ Bradbeer, *Setting the Stage: Korea, December 1950*, 233.

¹⁶⁴ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 169. Design enables commanders to view a situation from multiple perspectives, draw on varied sources of situational knowledge, and leverage subject matter experts while formulating their own understanding. Design supports battle command, enabling commanders to develop a thorough understanding of the operational environment and formulate effective solutions to complex, ill-structured problems per FM 5-0, Change 1. In essence, Ridgway conducted a design-like approach when deriving his initial operational construct as the FECOM Commander.

¹⁶⁵ Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 802.

¹⁶⁶ Appleman, *Disaster in Korea*, 432.

until such time as you thought it advisable, presumably after the threatening hostile offensive.”¹⁶⁷ However, due to Ridgway’s initial analysis of his operational construct he chose to place Van Fleet into command immediately and return to Japan.¹⁶⁸ Ridgway had full trust in the competent team he assembled in the Eighth Army, the initial guidance restricted Van Fleet’s ability to escalate the war, he retained control over air and naval forces, and he would commute to Korea from Japan to monitor Operation Dauntless, Van Fleet’s integration, and the possible CCF offensive.¹⁶⁹

Ridgway’s initial desired state was to continue on the offensive with Operation Dauntless, continue preparation for the withdrawal of U.N. forces in the event of the CCF Spring Offensive, and begin preparations for a possible Soviet intervention in Korea and Japan. On April 22, 1951, reconnaissance aircraft spotted the CCF forming for their Fifth Phase Offensive with the goal of capturing the South Korean capital of Seoul.¹⁷⁰ Ridgway returned to Korea due to the CCF offensive and ordered Van Fleet to move forces south using OPLAN Audacious, the Eighth Army defense in depth of South Korea. Although U.N. forces were forced to withdraw south, Van Fleet was able to keep Seoul from falling into the hands of the CCF. While Ridgway and Van Fleet agreed that terrain was largely irrelevant, they disagreed over Seoul’s political and psychological value.¹⁷¹ Van Fleet presented a persuasive argument and gained Ridgway’s

¹⁶⁷ Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 802.

¹⁶⁸ Appleman, *Disaster in Korea*, 434. LTG Van Fleet arrived in Korea on April 14, 1951. LTG Ridgway immediately held a simple change of command ceremony at which time LTG Van Fleet assumed command of the Eighth Army and Ridgway departed for Japan shortly after the conclusion of the ceremony.

¹⁶⁹ Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 803.

¹⁷⁰ Robert B. Bruce. “Tethered Eagle.” *Army History*, 83 (Winter 2012): 10.

¹⁷¹ Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 819.

approval to hold line Golden and prevent the CCF from capturing Seoul, however Ridgway was disturbed with the context of Van Fleet's dialogue.¹⁷²

While discussing terrain and its relevance during the CCF offensive, Van Fleet agreed with Ridgway regarding the limit of advance placed on the Eighth Army. However, Van Fleet "believed later in the summer, it would be advantageous to advance the Eighth Army's right flank as far north as Wonsan by amphibious operations."¹⁷³ Ridgway became extremely upset as he saw Van Fleet's line of thinking converging with MacArthur's. This thinking was not in line with Ridgway's initial guidance and completely out of sync with President Truman's aim of status quo antebellum. Ridgway feared the offensive act would "diminish the chances for a negotiated settlement by causing the Red Chinese to lose face or feel their borders threatened."¹⁷⁴ Ridgway issued Van Fleet a written directive on April 22, 1951, limiting the advance of the Eighth Army.¹⁷⁵ Additionally, LTG Ridgway had concerns over the possibility that select senior officers may desire to widen the war out of misguided loyalty to MacArthur. Thus, Ridgway issued further guidance when he published what Clay Blair describes as the most extraordinary document of the Korean War, the *Prevention of World War III*.¹⁷⁶ LTG Ridgway outlined his intent and why restrictions and restraints were imposed on military operations in his famous directive.¹⁷⁷

LTG Ridgway forwarded copies of his preliminary directive to the JCS and it was received "like a breath of fresh air."¹⁷⁸ Finally, the JCS and administration had a field commander

¹⁷² Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 819.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Appleman, *Disaster in Korea*, 457.

¹⁷⁶ Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 815.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 816.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

that was in line with the policies of the administration.¹⁷⁹ Within a week of Ridgway appointment as the FECOM commander, the JCS began a review of “all outstanding directives to Ridgway with an eye to eliminating those that were no longer applicable to the existing situation and codifying the others.”¹⁸⁰ Ridgway received greater latitude to responding to future communist air offensives, when the JCS granted him greater discretion to respond with retaliatory air strikes.¹⁸¹ Ridgway received more latitude than his predecessor, however he was still restricted from making political remarks and employing offensive strikes into China, Manchuria, and Russia. Similar to his *Prevention of World War III* directive, Ridgway provided the JCS with an advance copy of all directives and press releases before issuing them out of professional courtesy.¹⁸²

On May 23, 1951, General Ridgway ordered Van Fleet to conduct a counterattack as intelligence showed large-scale CCF withdrawals to the north.¹⁸³ On June 1, Operation Piledriver, the U.N. counterattack, regained all territory lost during the CCF Fifth Phased Offensive and placed the U.N. forces north of the 38th Parallel in a position of relative advantage for peace negotiations. Consequently, the Russian Delegate to the United Nations began calling for an armistice on June 23, 1951. General Ridgway, through a JCS directive, called upon the Chinese High Command that UNCOM would be willing to send representatives to discuss an armistice and cease-fire.¹⁸⁴ Although armistice discussions would continue for an additional two years, the Truman administration would obtain its strategic aim of limiting the war to the Korean peninsula and closing the war through a negotiated settlement.

¹⁷⁹ Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 816.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 815.

¹⁸¹ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 425.

¹⁸² Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 826.

¹⁸³ Bruce, *Tethered Eagle*, 18.

¹⁸⁴ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 182.

Section V

*By April 1951, the Eighth Army had again proved Erwin Rommel's assertion that American troops knew less but learned faster than any fighting men he had opposed. The Chinese seemed not to learn at all, as they repeated Chipyeong-ni again and again. Americans had learned, and learned well. The tragedy of American arms, however, is that having an imperfect sense of history Americans sometimes forget as quickly as they learn.*¹⁸⁵

Conclusion

As our Army transitions from an era of persistent conflict to one of a constrained fiscal environment, processes must be streamlined and resources maximized. The perceived intent is for the Army to do more with less, similar to what the Army leadership faced as it entered the Korean War. A cost effective method is to solve the correct problem immediately, not to throw the nation's blood and treasure blindly at multiple problems until you force a solution. Army Design Methodology "applies critical and creative thinking to understand, visualize, and describe complex, ill-structured problems and develop approaches to solve them."¹⁸⁶ As the United States Government reduces the military force structure due to the conclusion of large-scale operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Army faces the same analogous circumstance it has after each major war in its history. Select Army leaders throughout history have utilized history, theory, and doctrine to develop iterative cognitive methodologies that made sense of wicked problems and developed an operational approach that pulled our forces from the brink of defeat to victory. One such leader was General Matthew B. Ridgway.¹⁸⁷

This monograph examined examples of a right way and a wrong way to develop an operational approach. Generals MacArthur and Ridgway were bounded by troop strengths, the

¹⁸⁵ Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 303.

¹⁸⁶ Headquarters United States Army, *Field Manual 5-0 Change 1: The Operations Process*, 3-1.

¹⁸⁷ Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 882. LTG Ridgway was promoted to General on May 11, 1951.

Cold War, China, Russia, and political leadership and strategic guidance, however only General Ridgway succeeded. A new world confronted General MacArthur when the CCF entered the war. Limitations placed on the conduct of war by the Truman administration coupled with organizational parochialism and a culture that fostered unquestioning obedience and rejected collaborative and creative thinking resulted in an operational approach of escalation.¹⁸⁸ Instead of using a design-like process that converted intellectual power into combat power, MacArthur chose what he knew best, the use of greater force.¹⁸⁹ MacArthur chose an approach of escalation, which requested the use of nuclear weapons, blockading Chinese ports, utilizing Nationalist Chinese Forces in Korea and on mainland China, and bombing airfields in Manchuria and Russia. When President Truman and the JCS rejected MacArthur's operational approach, MacArthur took his case publicly including his famous remarks that "there is no substitute for victory."¹⁹⁰ Concerning MacArthur's approach, General Ridgway noted,

It was not therefore a "no-win" policy insinuated into our high councils by faceless subversives that guided the administration in its rejection of MacArthur's recommended program. It was essentially adherence to basically different policy: a different interpretation of the word: victory; a different view of the facts based on a better knowledge of the world situation.¹⁹¹

Clearly, the decisions made by General Ridgway during his command of the Eighth Army and United States Forces – Far East Command exemplified the practical application of a process similar to the Army Design Methodology. General Ridgway, then, facing the same circumstances as General MacArthur, formed a concept that determined how to apply the limited

¹⁸⁸ Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952, Volume Two*, 416. President Truman stated that MacArthur did not follow the practice of rotating staff officers and surrounded himself with the same group of friends for years. Additionally, Truman surmised that MacArthur had lost touch with the American population due to his large absence from the country and his practice of surrounding himself with "yes men."

¹⁸⁹ Headquarters United States Army, *Field Manual 5-0 Change 1: The Operations Process*, 3-7.

¹⁹⁰ Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 282.

¹⁹¹ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 149.

forces and capabilities available to achieve the desired endstate.¹⁹² Due to the change in strategic aims because of the entry of CCF, Ridgway needed an operational approach that ensured tactical actions remained fundamentally linked to achieving the desired condition of forcing a negotiated settlement. To develop an optimal operational approach, Ridgway adopted a technique similar to Army Design Methodology to guide the conceptual planning and inform detailed planning.

The U.S. Army must be prepared to face complex future challenges and conflicts that range from high intensity combined arms maneuver with a near-peer competitor to conducting wide area security operations in urban areas during a humanitarian crisis. Similar to Generals MacArthur and Ridgway, future Army commanders will find themselves conducting military operations with little to no political guidance as the political establishment feels its way through the situation until viable options present themselves. History has shown that commanders who approach problems in a holistic manner demonstrated an ability to translate the ambiguity of an operational environment into a viable operational construct. Design is “neither a process nor a checklist. It is a critical and creative thinking methodology to help commanders understand the environment, analyze problems, and consider potential approaches so they can exploit opportunities, identify vulnerabilities, and anticipate transitions during a campaign.”¹⁹³ Commanders must ensure they understand the importance of taking the time to envision the environment and construct their operations within the political context with which they are constrained. Only by understanding the strategic context can a commander fully align the military and political objectives to achieve the strategic endstate.

In conclusion, General Matthew Ridgway understood that victory was defined differently in the era following the Second World War. Conversely, Ridgway was able to successfully

¹⁹² Headquarters United States Army, *Field Manual 5-0 Change 1: The Operations Process*, 3-66.

¹⁹³ Headquarters United States Army, *Field Manual 5-0 Change 1: The Operations Process*, Forward.

identify and employ adaptive, innovative solutions, which reversed the direction of the war and ultimately forced the communists to the negotiating table. Only by obtaining a thorough education during the interwar period that fostered creative thinking was Ridgway able to design a comprehensive theory of action that linked tactical actions to the strategic endstate. Ridgway's successful application of a design-like methodology allowed him to use reasoning and logic to guide his detailed planning and operate within the constraints of a limited war.

Appendix A

Significant Events between January 1948 through May 1952¹⁹⁴

June 25, 1950	North Korean People's Army (NKPA) forces attack South Korea
June 28	NKPA Forces Capture Seoul
July 2	Task Force Smith disembarks Pusan, South Korea
July 5	Task Force Smith engages and delays advancing NKPA forces
July 13	Eighth United States Army becomes operational
July 24	United Nations Command established
August 4	Eighth Army establishes Pusan Perimeter
September 15	Inchon landings by X Corps
September 16	Eighth Army breaks out of Pusan Perimeter
September 26	Seoul recaptured by ROK and X Corps elements
October 1	ROK forces cross 38th Parallel
October 9	Eighth Army crosses 38th Parallel
October 19	1st ROK Division and U.S. 1st Cavalry Division capture Pyongyang
October 25	ROK forces conduct initial engagement with Chinese Communist Forces
October 26-27	X Corps conducts amphibious landings at Wonsan and Iwon
November 1-2	First U.S. engagements with CCF vicinity Unsan
November 21	Elements of 7th Infantry Division reaches Yalu River
November 25	CCF begin offensive against Eighth Army
November 27	CCF strike X Corps at Chosin Reservoir
November 29	U.S. forces begin retrograde operations

¹⁹⁴ United States Army, *The First Ten Years: A Short History of the Eighth United States Army, 1944-1954*, XVII; and, <http://www.history.Army.mil/reference/Korea/kw-chrono.htm> (accessed 12 February 2012).

December 23	LTG Walton “Johnnie” Walker, Commander of Eighth Army, is killed in a vehicle accident
December 26	LTG Matthew Ridgway assumes command of Eighth Army
January 1, 1951	CCF launch New Year’s Day offensive, Eighth Army conducts retrograde operations to reorganize and establish defensive positions south of the Han River
January 4	Seoul captured by CCF and NPKA forces
January 15	Eighth Army conducts Operations Wolfhound
January 25	Eighth Army conducts Operation Thunderbolt
February 10	Eighth Army conducts Operation Roundup
February 21	Eighth Army conducts Operation Killer
March 7	Eighth Army conducts Operation Ripper
March 15	U.N. Forces recapture Seoul and cross 38th Parallel for second time
March 22	Eighth Army conducts Operation Courageous
April 5	Eighth Army conducts Operation Rugged
April 11	Eighth Army conducts Operation Dauntless
April 11	General MacArthur relieved and LTG Ridgway succeeds him
April 14	LTG Van Fleet assumes command of Eighth Army
April 22	CCF and NKPA Spring Offensive begins
June 23	Soviet Union calls for armistice talks
July 10	Armistice talks begin at Kaesong
May 29, 1952	General Ridgway appointed as Commander of NATO forces and General Mark Clark assumes General Ridgway’s duties in Far East

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